



EHFG 2011: CHILD SAFETY CARD WINS EUROPEAN HEALTH AWARD

Every year more than 10,000 children die in EU countries as a result of unintentional injuries. The Child Safety Alliance was presented today with the European Health Award 2011 for a project that can save thousands of young lives. Every year more than 10,000 children die in EU countries as a result of unintentional injuries.

Bad Hofgastein, October 7, 2011 - A pioneering system for monitoring and reducing injuries to children won this year's prestige €10,000 European Health Award from a shortlist of nine trailblazing cross-border projects.

“The Child Safety Report Card is, I believe, in the best European Health Forum Gastein tradition of encouraging practical ideas that really make a difference – so that later everyone wonders why they didn't exist before,” Joanne Vincenten, Director of the European Child Safety Alliance, said today. “The problem we have confronted, with some very helpful encouragement from the European Parliament and the Commission, is an obvious one. Every year more than 10,000 children die in EU countries as a result of unintentional injuries; that means 28 children, a classroom-full, dying every single day of the year.”

Message on best practice “going viral”

And hundreds of thousands more are treated in hospitals or emergency departments and risk a lifetime of disability and suffering. An estimated 90 percent of these child injuries could be prevented, yet no EU Member State has adopted and/or implemented all strategies known to be effective.

The Report Card strategy identifies strengths and weaknesses in national child safety measures in each country, and recommends policies that are known to reduce at least the most critical injuries.

“And it really does work. The effect of monitoring, benchmarking, and publicising, Member States' commitment to practices that are known to be effective has in every case been a leap in awareness, knowledge, and incentive for action,” Joanne Vincenten stressed. “This year the cards are being used in 32 countries, and the idea has spread to other continents, and thousands more children are enjoying their lives who would otherwise be in hospital or worse.”

Sponsored for the first time by FOPI, the Austrian association of research-based pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, the European Health Award honours projects and initiatives aimed at improving medical care in Europe.

Cross-border projects: not just fruitful but money-saving

The winner was picked by leading health experts from all over Europe from a shortlist of nine trailblazing cross-border projects. The main criteria are that more than one European country must be involved and that results are transferable to other states and directly benefit a substantial part of the population or relatively large patient groups.

“What this award has shown, over and over again, is how fruitful and effective and - not least, cost-saving cross-border cooperation can be,” said EHFG President Prof. Dr. Günther Leiner, who headed the panel of judges. “It has been unusually hard to pick the best of the many contenders for this year’s award. These are really pioneering, creative ideas for making Europe a healthier place, and reducing unequal access to health care. The Child Safety Report Card will, I believe, become the gold standard for policy on preventable children’s injuries.”

The 2011 shortlist included projects covering a wide range of urgent concerns, from osteoporosis networks to ways of improving information about HIV and other sexually-transmitted disease, and combating the diabetes epidemic.

The EHFG is the most important conference on health care policy in the EU. This year it attracted more than 600 decision-makers from 45 countries for discussions on the latest developments in health care policy.

EHFG Plenary Session, 7 October 2011

EHFG Press Office:

Dr. Birgit Kofler

B&K Medien- und Kommunikationsberatung

Ph. during the Congress: +43 6432 3393 239

Mobile: +43 676 636 89 30

Ph. Vienna office: +43 1 319 43 78

e-mail: kofler@bkkommunikation.com